

ITEM: 8

SUBJECT: Overview of Salinity Issues in the Central Valley

BOARD ACTION: Information Item Only

BACKGROUND: The salinity impairment of surface and groundwater in the Central Valley is a subset of a more far-reaching problem shared by most of California, other arid western states, and much of the developed world. As surface and groundwater supplies become scarcer, and as wastewater streams become more concentrated, salinity impairments are occurring with greater frequency and magnitude. These impairments will not be resolved by purely technical solutions. Solution of the salinity impairment in the Central Valley will depend upon development and successful implementation of effective policies, in conjunction with the removal of institutional barriers.

Staff will review for the Board the present policies regarding salt control, and discuss the need to strengthen salt control policies.

Staff will also brief the Board on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared by U. S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) addressing how it intends to provide drainage service for salinity control to the San Luis Unit and Northern Federal Service Areas (Westlands Water District and Grassland Bypass Project Service Area). Staff prepared comments on the DEIS that pointed out areas where the proposals were inconsistent with present Board policy regarding salt buildup and salt disposal.

ISSUES: Are present salt control policies of the Board adequate?

Direction to staff on developing salinity control programs and the resources to establish a long-term salinity control plan.

Mgmt. Review \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Review \_\_\_\_\_

**15/16 September 2005**

**Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board Hearing Room**

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